

WAR SPURS DESIGNERS TO REALIZATION OF POWER

Lack of Identity of American Makers of Gowns in Minds of Women Is Responsible for Paris Label.

By E. W. FAIRCHILD.

The manufacture of clothing and furnishings has come to be one of the major industries of the United States, with annual output amounting to several hundred millions of dollars. But this great aggregate of factory-made "needle merchandise" is divided among several thousand manufacturers, of whom none, save two or three, has any identity among the women who buy and wear his product.

None among these thousands of manufacturers of women's wear is credited with as much as \$1,000,000 of sales annually. Not more than three or four firms are believed to sell as much as \$2,000,000 a year. One can number on one's fingers the firms with an annual output of \$2,000,000 to \$3,000,000. But there are hundreds of manufacturers of the former class who sell an annual production of from \$500,000 to \$1,500,000, and thousands whose profits must come from an annual production of less than \$500,000.

By far the larger part of this annual production of several hundred million dollars worth of women's wear is passed on to consumers through sales from the factories direct to retail merchants. Mail order houses have developed increasing sales of these goods, and jobbers dispose each year of considerable volume of the cheaper and more staple items. But the total annual output through both mail order firms and jobbers is a small item compared with the sales direct from manufacturer to retailer. Just how many retail merchants in the United States will handle women's wear stocks in 1916 it is impossible to state with accuracy. All the time new specialty businesses are established which carry some of these stocks. Hardly a country store nowadays in the most remote corner but can show at least some shirtwaists and skirts, and probably the simpler dresses, to say nothing of such staples as corsets, underwear, negligees and children's dresses. It is a conservative estimate to say that there are more than 15,000 retail stores for whose orders some five thousand manufacturers of women's wear are accustomed to compete.

It is a matter of common knowledge that more than 80 per cent of this great volume of annual production and sales in women's wear lines is concentrated in New York city. There are manufacturing markets of considerable importance in Cleveland, Philadelphia, Chicago, Boston, St. Louis, Toledo, Baltimore and Cincinnati, with scattered representation elsewhere, and with a growing tendency toward the development of manufacturing establishments in these lines more widely throughout the United States. But many factors combine to assure the continued predominance of New York city as both the selling and the manufacturing center of the women's wear trade.

This leadership of New York city in the production and sale of women's wear accounts for the fact that retail merchants and buyers of women's wear stocks gather in New York more frequently and in greater numbers than in any other city in the world. This frequency of visits is due largely to the dominance of style as a factor in the sale of all women's wear stocks. Styles in women's wear start, develop and change so rapidly and so constantly that even the merchant in a small city finds it necessary to keep as closely as possible in touch with the market. Buyers from the New England territory are accustomed to be in New York once a week during eight or ten months of the year. Buyers from Pacific coast cities think it nothing unusual to be in New York six or eight times a year, and to spend therefore sixty to eighty days a year on trains going to and from this market.

To discuss or analyze the sale of new styles is beyond the purpose of this article. Let it suffice to state that the business of manufacturers of women's wear is not to originate fashions, but to make clothes in accordance with the fashions which are merchandise. The American manufacturer leads the world in ability to incorporate in his production these fashions and to make them his own, which are the mode of the moment.

The new year finds manufacturers of women's wear facing new conditions. Demand from the buyers of America through retail stores bids fair to be greater than for many years past. A greater percentage of this demand than ever will be for merchandise of the latter grades. At the same time the factories and other supplies which are the raw material for women's wear manufacturers are scarce, high in price and

would of course be contrary to all precedent. The effect of the war on the American women's wear trade has been to compel greater initiative in designing. Development in this direction will undoubtedly continue during 1916. This does not mean that America is independent of Paris in originating new modes. The significance is rather that American manufacturers, while still gladly utilizing whatever fashions are procurable from Paris and whatever materials and trimmings war torn Europe still manages to make and sell, are coming to realize all the time more consciously their own power. That realization is still hesitant, sporadic, even apologetic, yet we have youth and it always accomplishes what it seeks. We are the great young nation of the world and the United States is the world's playground.

The greatest obstacle to any full realization of the designing ability of American manufacturing organizations is the lack of any identity for these trades in the minds of American women. In other words the great American public knows nothing about the American supplying American women this year. And the policy of the most exclusive American retailers is to use a Paris name as reason quite sufficient for high price.

In conclusion, the American women's wear trade faces the most promising, most interesting and most trying year in its experience. Their profits must depend on the ability of the individual manufacturer or merchant to analyze new conditions, adapt organizations and equipment and policy to suit these conditions and thus turn promise into reality.

The business is not only coming it is here.

HARTFORD COUNTY HAS 500 MANUFACTURERS

55,000 Workers Produce Goods to Value of \$130,000,000 Annually.

Hartford county is the heart of Connecticut geographically. It has a population of 260,000, of which about 55,000 are engaged in manufacturing pursuits of a markedly diversified nature. There are approximately 500 manufacturing establishments in the county having a total annual payroll of \$48,000,000 and producing goods of an estimated value of \$130,000,000 annually. In these plants thousands of the best of the county's typewriters, tools, clocks, special and automatic machinery, rubber tires, screws, electrical accessories, valves, hardware, nails, hardware, rules, and carpets, leather goods, ball bearings, silk, carpets, organs and innumerable novelties of a mechanical nature, all of which exemplify Yankee ingenuity of the highest order.

Despite the drawbacks which many of Hartford's industries had to encounter throughout 1915 the volume of business was large and profitable. Factories as well as the material and the demands for skilled men increased the total working force by approximately 6,000. Its reason for this demand was the war. The increase in many lines, the average increase being 20 per cent. Some concerns in the county shared their profits with employees in the form of a bonus besides increasing wages.

A sudden ending of the great European conflict would have but slight immediate effect on our industries for reasons already outlined, but a quick resumption of European competition would be a serious blow to the county. It is the opinion of experts here that the county's business is in a very healthy condition and that the supply of specialized labor requisite for business expansion can be obtained. A sudden ending of the great European conflict would have but slight immediate effect on our industries for reasons already outlined, but a quick resumption of European competition would be a serious blow to the county. It is the opinion of experts here that the county's business is in a very healthy condition and that the supply of specialized labor requisite for business expansion can be obtained.

go up and the production of the present plants is increased. "Since the business boom came no factories were erected in this territory for the sole purpose of filling war contracts, and it is a noteworthy fact that plants which were erected during the war have not been hastily refused to accept orders for munitions, although in many instances they were equipped to do a large amount of work in this particular line. Business of this nature was declined on the ground that while it might prove temporarily profitable it would not pay in the long run. For an established concern to devote from its specific line and become tied up with special contracts might prevent it from taking full advantage of business opportunities in its own particular field when conditions warranted.

"The stability of business in Hartford county is attributed to the ingenuity of its captains of industry and the skill of the workmen. This wonderful combination constitutes the natural advantage of the State in general and of Hartford county in particular. Mechanical and business geniuses like Amos Whitney, H. M. W. Hanson, Charles E. Rice and Charles E. Billings in Hartford; the Cheney brothers of South Manchester, founders of the great silk industry there; A. E. Rowell, Charles T. Treadway and J. L. Witt Page of Bristol; Charles Glover, Charles F. Smith and George P. Hart of New Britain and William Hill of Colvilleville are among those looked up to as the industrial leaders of the territory. The list could be greatly enlarged if allotted space permit."

DEMAND FOR INSULATED WIRE.

Increased Use for Electricity Causes Larger Production.

"The gross income in the past year of the electrical industry and service," says Edwin W. Moore, president of the Electric Cable Company, "must have reached more than \$2,000,000. This included central stations, electric railways, telegraph and telephone service, electrical manufacturing and the like. This will give some idea of the importance of this industry in the territory which is tied up in electrical interests in this country. The income from the lighting industry alone last year was \$200,000. Electric railways, which were keeping this country more closely together than ever, had receipts of \$700,000. The telephone and telegraph service brought \$150,000. The output of all equipment does not meet the demand.

"Our interest as makers of insulated wire lies in the fact that every watt of electric current that is produced passes through an electrical conductor. The electric locomotive in the mine, the motor in the factory, the electric heating iron, or your electric light, all require a source of power generation through insulated wire.

MANY BUYERS IN NEW YORK.

Come From All Parts of Country and Merchants Are Busy.

There is no better barometer for the prosperity of the country, aside from actual reports and figures, than the buyers from out of town coming daily to New York to replenish their stocks, when the aggregate of business men who come in contact with them daily by the score or more are unanimous in their opinion, gauged by these buyers, that business in all lines of the country is in better condition than it has been since the prosperity period ending in 1907. Conditions were unsettled before the beginning of the war, and during the first year, when merchants had not yet been able to reestablish their business to cope with changed conditions, buyers bought gingerly in the fear of overloading at advanced rates, in small lots. Consequently the dry goods merchant could hardly himself sell out of all old stock and ready for heavier buying on a more substantial basis—that is, he now knows the situation—and it gives his spring orders earlier than usual in the fear of higher prices and a more goods if he waits. Some houses, it is reported, have even bought up on pluses for delivery next fall, fearing a shortage and advanced prices. What has happened is really in the nature of a seven-year dry goods house boom, perhaps, in a few cases, actuated by a seven-year luck superstition prevalent among dry goods merchants and manufacturers, in addition to war conditions.

CUBA AND BAHAMAS ATTRACT TOURISTS

Islands Noted for Points of Historic Interest and Mild Climate.

A great many people who annually paid a visit to Europe during winter until the war began are now journeying to points in Havana, Cuba, Nassau and the Bahamas.

In Havana can be found many points of interest. There are forts and cathedrals, parks and gardens, interesting shops loaded with all sorts of quaint and unique trinkets and many interesting sights.

"Havana has just the right mixture of old and new," said a traveler who spent considerable time there. "I like medieval forts and sixteenth century cathedrals as well as anybody, but when night comes around it is awfully pleasant to return to a cool, up to date hotel, enjoy a well cooked supper and spend the evening walking on the electrically lighted Prado, dancing at the Plaza or Miramar or watching the roof garden movies."

"Havana is no small town. It numbers its population at about 350,000 and its shipping movements in larger numbers than New Orleans. But you do not think of such things as these. So many strange sights and new impressions crowd upon your senses that you are literally bewildered.

"All people do not care for history.

But everybody likes to hear about the early days of Havana, because many of the things talked about are before your very eyes. In Havana they take you to a medieval fortress and say: 'In this stronghold Hernando de Soto once lived as the ruler of Cuba and from it he set sail on the journey which ended with the discovery of the Mississippi and his death. From the same ramparts Ponce de Leon searched the horizon in vain for his Fountain of Eternal Youth' or they take you to the palace of the Spanish captain-general and say: 'Within the shadow of this building has occurred practically every official Cuban act of major importance of the last 400 years. One hundred and thirty-six successive viceroys governed the island of Cuba from these rooms. Here the English standard once floated. Here the reins of power passed from Spanish to American hands. Here the first Cuban President was inaugurated, the second American Government of Intervention again placed in power and finally the present republic established on a firm and substantial basis. A very restricted area in the old part of the city is the pivotal point around which all of Cuban history revolves.

"It is along the Prado and the Malecon, and about the flower beds of Central Park that Havana and its visitors frolic every evening during the tourist season. The municipal band plays alternately in both places, causing the crowd to shift its interest accordingly. These centers of life are never without their promenading throngs. Although many succumb to the enticements of the glittering restaurants and theatres hundreds of others find sufficient enjoyment in strolling through the balmy, flower-scented air of Havana's perpetual June.

"Everybody visits the Columbus Ca-

thedral. Its real name is Cathedral de la Virgen Maria de la Concepcion, and it was erected by the Jesuits between 1656 and 1724. It is a very substantial building, constructed of massive coral rock. It contains many interesting vestments and other artistic works, which the sacristan will exhibit if properly approached. According to the people of Havana the remains of Columbus lay buried here from 1796 to 1895, at which time the evacuating Spaniards took them with them to Seville. The Santo Dominicans deny this, claiming that later discoveries show that the remains transferred to Havana in 1796 were erroneously supposed to be those of Columbus, but that the real ashes now repose in the cathedral at Santo Domingo city.

"The person who stays for any length of time in Havana should arrange to take some sort of a short excursion into the country. It is only in that way that you can gain a true idea of the wonders of the West Indian tropics. The interesting city of Matanzas is not very far from Havana and offers a very rewarding objective point for a short excursion.

"The climate of Nassau is very unusual. The thermometer stays close to 72 degrees Fahrenheit, from December to May. Flowers are exceptionally prolific and number roses, lilies and violets among their prominent specimens. The roses are particularly beautiful and adorn the best tables and the humblest cottages with equal grace.


Nassau's principal landing place is called Rawson Square. Up from the shore line various streets lead to the higher part of the town, where the hotels and public buildings are located. Many of these structures are of considerable historic interest and date from early colonial days. The fish and sponge markets are very interesting and always attract their quota of tourists. Sponging is one of the most important industries of the Bahamas, and it is said that the market devoted to trade in this commodity is the largest of its kind in the world. The Colonial and the Royal Victoria are the principal hotels. They are operated by the Florida East Coast Hotels Company, which keeps them as attractive and up to the minute as they do its other hostels.

"Bathing at the Eastern Port and Hog Island is exceptionally alluring because of the remarkable transparency of the water surrounding Nassau. One can scarcely believe that any liquid could be so clear and crystalline until a visit to the marine gardens is made. In glass bottomed boats or through water glasses the visitor can gaze down into stupendous depths at beautiful coral and other marine splendors or watch such fish as amberjacks, groupers, margate, yellowtails, kingfish, muttonfish and sharks swimming far beneath.

"Three hallowed relics of Nassau's

warlike past exist in Forts Montague, Piccadilly and Charlotte, which guard the eastern, central and western portions of the city respectively. Despite their protected positions history records of the Ward Lane market, which was held at least three times, and that the American, British and Spanish flags, as well as the black emblem of a pirate, have at different times waved over Nassau. Fort Charlotte, at the western extremity of the city, was built in 1783. The sur-

rounding grounds are now given over to the royal but peaceful game of golf. The comfortable American steamers of the Ward Lane market, which was held at least three times, and that the American, British and Spanish flags, as well as the black emblem of a pirate, have at different times waved over Nassau. Fort Charlotte, at the western extremity of the city, was built in 1783. The sur-



Alexander Smith & Sons
105 & 107 Fifth Avenue
NEW YORK

Panama-Pacific International Exposition
San Francisco, 1915
The Grand Prize
Awarded to
Alexander Smith & Sons Carpet Co.
For
Carpetings and Rugs
Send for Our New Catalogue
Illustrating in colors 92 pages of our floor coverings

BIGELOW-HARTFORD CARPET CO.

Established 1825

Manufacturers of the BEST in

CARPETS and RUGS

New York Salesroom: 25 Madison Avenue
Boston: 69 Summer Street
Chicago: 1318 Lytton Building
San Francisco: 770 Mission Street

Telephone Plaza 4067-4068
A. PAUL
Importer Manufacturer
The Reliable Furrier
WHOLESALE RETAIL
723 LEXINGTON AVE.
NEW YORK
PARIS, 75 Rue St. Dominique

The Outlook in Textiles

Overshadowing all the gains that have been made in most branches of the textile industry during the year just past is the menace from the shortage in dye-stuffs.

Manufacturers have urged in vain upon the government to take some action for the protection of their interests. As the situation grows more acute, more determined will grow the protests to Washington.

It is a fact that no large shipments have come to this country since the end of last March. Many mills already have come to the end of their supplies and even those most fortunately conditioned are beginning to feel the pinch.

But, apart from the dye-stuff shortage, which prompt government action or inventive genius only can remedy, the year in textiles has been one of marked progress. The gains have been slow, but steady.

This progress must very largely be credited to the war. The European conflict has brought about new conditions; it has created new demands; it has brought employment up to a high level.

As a general proposition, the textile industry in this country is flourishing. Many plants have been unable to take care of their orders and have been employing outside machinery. In fact, in many instances orders looking a long way ahead have actually been refused. Manufacturers have been willing to meet the demands of the day and of the immediate future. But they have felt that further than that they would not go because they could not speculate with any degree of confidence upon the future as affecting raw materials.

The market conditions are sound. Before the beginning of the year

stocks had been reduced to a low ebb. And there has been no large purchasing to replace the stocks, but rather the consistent small purchasing—small in individual orders, but large when reviewed as a whole—to meet already existing demands.

An important factor in the textile situation has been that of the actual "war orders."

Conditions in the war zones stopped many imports. And the closing down of the mills within the war zones created a new demand. So the manufacturers of this country were twice favored.

During the year there were heavy demands for shipments to the belligerents. Most of these orders have been executed. But new orders are awaited, for while a demand has gone up from England that the English mills be favored with orders of this kind, the demand is so large that it is expected that the mills here will continue to profit.

The belligerent countries established well organized purchasing agencies in this country and bought intelligently.

The ready-made garment industry flourished as a result of war orders, but lately there has been an indication of a change in method, for large orders have come from the belligerents for goods in the piece.

The figures cited in the matter of the war orders are astounding. It has been stated with authority that the principal wool manufacturing business factor has received contracts aggregating \$30,000,000. Another report about the same factor says the figures will exceed \$40,000,000.

Other branches of the textile industry have profited accordingly. The Pittsfield district of Massachusetts

has been deluged with orders for blankets, overcoatings and suitings. Wool piece goods and knitted fabrics have been in great demand. Orders have been reported here to provide underwear equipment for whole armies—and the armies of today are not the armies of even the last great war. Their units are in millions sometimes.

Surgical supplies have been in great demand also. Absorbent cotton and bandages have totalled imposing figures.

Taking the conditions of the whole country, the outlook is for another year of great prosperity—a prosperity that will be heightened if something can be done to relieve the dye-stuff shortage.

It is certain that something will be done. Necessity is the mother of invention and the American mind leans towards invention anyway. So out of this war there will come a discovery, or invention, that will make the American market less dependent than ever before upon the German monopoly. Already Americans have begun to reapproach themselves that they did not attempt to solve the dye-stuff problem before. But they are arguing in self-extenuation that they little knew the extent of the German monopoly.

Out of this situation, it is expected, will come a closer cooperation between the government and commerce, especially the manufacturer. A scientific study by a government bureau of a problem such as that of dye-stuffs might have anticipated the conditions which confront the textile manufacturers of today.

Some months ago an attempt was made to arrange for a shipment of two cargoes of dyes from Germany.

The cargoes were to be consigned to the Secretary of Commerce, Mr. William C. Redfield, and he was to arrange for their distribution. The German Government would not agree to this plan, saying it had commercial agents in this country to arrange for just such distribution as would have been involved.

The consent of the British Government to the shipment of dyes from Germany has been received. But Germany stands upon her contention that she must, in return, receive cargoes of cotton. As England has declared a strict contraband upon cotton, which it has never lifted, the situation shows no prospect of being relieved.

Meantime there is no delay in the efforts to establish a dye-stuff industry in this country. It is recognized that it is a herculean task.

The shortage in dye-stuffs has influenced prices to no small degree.

The developments of the export trade have not been as large as were anticipated—that is, of course, when the war orders proper are left out of the reckoning. South America was hailed as a great outlet for American manufacturers and the trade with the neighbor republics has been fostered. But it has not grown to anything like the extent that was forecasted.

In the cotton trade there has been marked development in specialties and the trade has progressed steadily. But one feature of this trade is disappointing—the outlook in China. The Chinese at one time were great consumers of American cotton goods, but American trade there has decreased with a steady rapidity. Japan is taking America's place in the Oriental Republic.

HUBBARD BROS. & CO.

Cotton Merchants

HANOVER SQUARE NEW YORK

BRANCH OFFICES:
53 State St., Boston, Mass.
38 Rock St., Fall River, Mass.
Devereaux Building, Utica, N. Y.

Members New-York Cotton Exchange, New Orleans Cotton Exchange, New York Produce Exchange; associate members Liverpool Cotton Association. Orders solicited for the purchase and sale of cotton and cotton seed oil for future delivery. Special attention and liberal terms given for consignments of spot cotton for delivery. Correspondence invited.